

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/JP02/12900

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

Int.Cl⁷ A61F13/15

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

Int.Cl⁷ A61F13/15-13/84

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Jitsuyo Shinan Koho	1926-1996	Toroku Jitsuyo Shinan Koho	1994-2002
Kokai Jitsuyo Shinan Koho	1971-2002	Jitsuyo Shinan Toroku Koho	1996-2002

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	JP 3-251244 A (Uni-Charm Corp.), 08 November, 1991 (08.11.91), Page 2, lower right column (Family: none)	1

☐ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

☐ See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:
 "A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance
 "E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date
 "L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)
 "O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means
 "P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
 "X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
 "Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art
 "&" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search
11 March, 2003 (11.03.03)

Date of mailing of the international search report
01 April, 2003 (01.04.03)

Name and mailing address of the ISA/
Japanese Patent Office

Authorized officer

Facsimile No.

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Box I Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

This international search report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:
2. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to parts of the international application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful international search can be carried out, specifically:
3. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).

Box II Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 3 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:

Claims 2-4, 6-8, 11, 12, 14, 18-22, 26, 30, and 34 quote claim 1. Claims 5, 13, and 17 and 15 and 16 quote claims 3, 12, and 14, respectively. Accordingly, a common matter pertaining to claims 1-34 is a matter described in claim 1.

However, an absorber product comprising a nonpermeable surface sheet positioned on the upper side thereof, a nonpermeable back sheet positioned on the lower side, and an absorber capable of absorbing discharged liquid located between the surface sheet and the back sheet and having a flow passage for moving a part or all of the discharged liquid supplied to the surface (continued to extra sheet)

1. ☐ As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers all searchable claims.
2. ☐ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.
3. ☐ As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:
4. ☒ No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this international search report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.: 1

Remark on Protest ☐ The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest.
☐ No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

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Continuation of Box No. II of continuation of first sheet (1)

sheet to a back sheet side is disclosed in JP 3-251244A (Uni-Charm Corp.), 1991.11.08 (refer to, particularly, such a description in the right lower column on page 2 that "moisture cannot be moved directly to the absorber (4) in a film material portion (7)"), and it is a common technology in the technical field of absorber product that highly absorbing resin is contained in the absorber. As a result, the common matter pertaining to Claims 1-34 is still at a level of a prior art. Then, in the meaning of the second sentence of PCT Rule 13.2 ("special technical feature" means a technical feature expressing the contribution of the inventions as described in Claims made generally to the prior art), the common matter is not a special technical feature.

Therefore, it is clear that Claims 1-34 do not fulfill the requirements of unity of invention.

Then, as pointed out in the Official Order for payment of fees to be additionally paid, the International Searching Authority approves that Claims 1-34 can be classified into 23 groups of inventions as described below.

1. Claim 1
2. Claim 2
3. Claim 3
4. Claim 4
5. Claim 5
6. Claim 6
7. Claim 7
8. Claims 8-10
9. Claim 11
10. Claim 12
11. Claim 13
12. Claim 14
13. Claim 15
14. Claim 16
15. Claim 17
16. Claim 18
17. Claim 19
18. Claim 20
19. Claims 21-25
20. Claims 26-29
21. Claims 30 and 31
22. Claims 32 and 33
23. Claim 34